



**EDUCATOR RETENTION
TASK FORCE**

Member Biographies

March 29, 2023



AN EDUCATOR FROM A TRIBAL COMMUNITY

LYNETTE STANT

Lynette Stant, from the Diné Nation is the 2020 Arizona Teacher of the Year. She is an eighteen-year veteran elementary teacher who teaches 3rd grade on the Salt River Indian Reservation in Scottsdale, Arizona. She holds a master's degree from Grand Canyon University, and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Arizona State University. Most recently, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Northern Arizona University for her leadership in education and in her community. Her mission is to ensure her students have an equitable opportunity to become leaders and to use her cultural experiences to be a reflective educator.



AN EDUCATOR FROM A RURAL SCHOOL

LUISA ARREOLA

Luisa Arreola graduated from Northern Arizona University-Yuma campus, with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. Her passion for education ignited her desire to continue her educational journey, earning a Master's Degree in Secondary Education with an emphasis in Giftedness. She currently serves as the Gifted Program Coordinator at San Luis Middle School in San Luis, AZ. Luisa has served as a mentor teacher from 2015-2020 at Southwest Jr. High. Motivated by the REDforED movement and her aspiration to fight for her fellow educators and support staff, she became a REDforED liaison for her district. This role sparked her passion for education

to a much higher level, inspiring her to run for the Somerton Elementary School Board, where she currently holds a seat for the term of 2023-2026. Her love for community and for the prosperity of its members is clear with her continual volunteering at the San Luis Youth Center; coaching basketball and multiple community activities. She is currently serving on the Yuma Union Arts Advisory Board. Luisa was voted Teacher of the Year for Southwest Jr. High in 2019 and 2021, and Teacher of the Year at San Luis Middle School. She is also the mother of an amazing, kind and humble son.



AN EDUCATOR FROM AN URBAN SCHOOL

VIOLETA RAMOS

Violeta was born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona, and is a proud product of public education. She is a first-generation graduate in her family and received a Bachelor's degree in Spanish from the University of Arizona. She has recently acquired a Master's in Organizational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. Violeta has 11 years of previous work experience in the nonprofit sector supporting various marginalized and underserved communities, where her heart and passion lies most. Violeta is currently a high school Spanish teacher and a newly elected Governing Board member of the Osborn School District.



AN EDUCATOR FROM A TITLE I SCHOOL

ZEL FOWLER

Zel Fowler, a 2023 Arizona Top Ten Teacher of the Year, currently teaches gifted education at Brunson-Lee Elementary School in the Balsz School District. Fowler is recognized for her differentiating teaching style that enhances student engagement and achievement. Zel has created and led various school and community-based programs that help provide youth with equitable opportunities to develop their talents and accommodate their social and emotional needs. She led the revitalization of the Arizona Alliance of Black School Educators, co-founded its STEAM Enrichment Program, and led the Teacher

Leadership Summit. Zel has presented at local, national, and international conferences and has been the recipient of several awards, including the 2015 National Alliance of Black School Educators' Distinguished Educator of the Year. In 2016, she was invited to the White House by President Obama in recognition of being an outstanding teacher. Zel volunteers on several local and national boards and committees, and has served on the Arizona State Superintendent's African American Advisory Council and the National Alliance of Black School Educators' board of directors. Zel currently serves on Grand Canyon University's Advisory Consortium, the Arizona Teacher Residency Advisory Board, and she's the President of the Arizona Alliance of Black School Educators. Zel's a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at the University of Phoenix. In her free time she enjoys exploring the outdoors and spending time with her family.



AN EDUCATOR FROM A CHARTER SCHOOL

JENNIFER HULBERT

Jennifer Hulbert is a second grade teacher at Champion Schools-South Mountain, a Title 1 school in South Phoenix. Growing up, she always knew her life's path would one day lead her to education. Jennifer's grandmother, who helped grow her love for learning at an early age, was an elementary school teacher for forty years. Jennifer is very grateful for this opportunity to work alongside Governor Hobbs, fellow educators, and other community stakeholders. Jennifer looks forward to being a facilitator of positive and lasting change in our community!



AN EDUCATOR WHO RECENTLY LEFT THE PROFESSION

SARAH TOLAR

Sarah Tolar previously worked in public education in Arizona for 17 years, predominantly as part of the Tempe Union High School District. Starting as an English teacher and swim coach, Sarah had the opportunity over the years to serve as everything from Student Council Sponsor to Fine Arts Coordinator and plenty in between. After moving into administration, Sarah most recently served as Principal at Marcos de Niza High School in Tempe. Following the 21-22 school year, she accepted an opportunity with the City of Mesa to support education from the municipal perspective as the City of Mesa's Education and Workforce Administrator.



A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER OR DIRECTOR

JESUS "ANTHONY" LOVIO

Anthony Lovio is a special education teacher at Laguna Elementary School in the Flowing Wells Unified School District. He began his career as an education support professional for the district preschool and later at Laguna Elementary. Anthony's passion towards helping students reach their full potential took a huge role in his aspirations to become a certified special education teacher. He is now working alongside the same teacher who he was an education support professional for and continues to grow young minds. Anthony is a proud graduate of Flowing Wells High School, Prescott College, and a board member for the Arizona Education Association.



AN EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL

CURT BERTELSEN

Curt Bertelsen is the Director of Professional Development for the Pima Joint Technical Education District. He taught Agriscience at Flowing Wells High School for 23 years. He has served as the President of the Association for Career and Technical Education in Arizona. He helped to establish the Arizona Career & Technical Education Curriculum Consortium and Premier Series Program. He and his wife Ann live in Tucson, Arizona where they raised three children.



A SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

JANINE MENARD

Janine Menard has been a School Counselor for 20 years. She has supported students' social and emotional needs, college and career readiness and academic success. As the Board of Director Chair for the Arizona School Counselors Association from 2017 to 2019, Janine acted to secure an additional \$20 million for the School Safety Grant Program, allowing Arizona school districts to hire 150 more counselors. Janine was an active during the Red for Ed movement. In 2018, Janine received the Arizona School Counselors Association Advocate of the Year award.



A HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONAL

JUSTIN WING

Justin Wing has served as a human resource professional in Arizona public schools for 27 years. Mr. Wing is the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for Mesa Public Schools, the largest school district in Arizona. Prior to, Mr. Wing led human resources for 25 years at the Washington Elementary School District in Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Wing is the past president of the Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association and remains a board member today. As an ASPAA representative, Mr. Wing has been instrumental in gathering and sharing teacher shortage data in public schools for over the past eight years.

Mr. Wing has a beautiful and supportive wife, Shannon Wing. Shannon is a first grade teacher for the Dysart Unified School District. He has three children - two are currently in K-12 public schools and the third is a recent college graduate from the University of Arizona.



A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

RUTH ELLEN ELINSKI

Ruth Ellen Elinski has lived in the Verde Valley since 2004 and is the Director and a Certified Business Analyst for the Yavapai College Small Business Development Center (SBDC). An entrepreneur, Ruth Ellen has launched multiple businesses in rural Arizona. She currently serves on the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District Governing Board and has additional experience serving as a non-profit director, leading alongside a 20-member Board of Directors. She is a Fellow of the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership Flinn Brown Leadership Academy, a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, and has a degree in Public Affairs and Management from Indiana University. Ruth Ellen is most proudly the mom of two brilliant daughters.





A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR FROM A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DR. MELISSA SADORF

Dr. Melissa Sadorf currently serves as the Superintendent of the Stanfield Elementary School District. An educator at all levels for over three decades, Dr. Sadorf brings considerable expertise in leadership and teacher preparation, policy development and advocacy, and education in a variety of educational settings. Her commitment to giving back to the teaching profession has opened opportunities to mentor educators in both rural and urban settings, ensuring they gain the skills and background knowledge to hone their leadership. She serves as Part Time Faculty for Northern Arizona University and Central Arizona College in a variety of courses concentrated on teacher preparation and educational leadership. In the past decade, Dr. Sadorf has focused on advocating for rural education and rural leaders. She has been involved with local, state, and regional organizations to help raise awareness on the unique challenges that rural educators face. She has served on a variety of Boards and Committees including the Arizona Health Improvement Plan Steering Committee, the Rural Library Network Community Advisory Board, and the Western Educational Equity Assistance Center. She hosts a podcast that explores rural issues and also holds monthly superintendent virtual round tables to ensure rural voices are being heard. Dr. Sadorf serves as the President Elect of the National Rural Education Association and the President of the Arizona Rural Schools Association. She also is the Executive Director for two organizations: Northern Arizona University's Rural Resource Center and the Arizona ASCD Affiliate.



A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR FROM A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN A TRIBAL COMMUNITY

QUINCY NATAY

Quincy Natay is a lifelong resident of Chinle, Arizona on the Navajo Nation. After graduating from Chinle High School in 1983, he completed a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1988 at Northern Arizona University (NAU), and earned an MBA also at NAU in 2001. He became Superintendent of Chinle Unified School District in 2013. He led a cohesive school board and staff from 2015 to 2019 to implement a strategic plan that

led to Chinle Unified students producing the highest academic pass rates of any reservation district in Arizona, surpassing many non-reservation districts. Following 18 months of Navajo Nation mandated school closures during the COVID pandemic, his schools have rebounded with state test pass rates that continue to advance in aggressively closing the gap.

During his 33-year career in public education, he has influenced state and federal legislation that continues to benefit reservation districts. He has served on the NAFIS board (National Association of Federally Impacted Schools) for many years and is currently the vice president. He has also been a longstanding member of the NIISA board (National Indian Impacted Schools Association) and is the past president. He has effectively leveraged these roles to advocate for high quality education for Native American children as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty and mitigating the effects of historical trauma. The exceptional academic achievement of students during his time as Superintendent of Chinle Unified has led to state committee appointments, keynote invitations, and district recognition. Most recently, in 2023, K-12 Deep Dive selected Chinle Unified as a finalist for their publication's national District of the Year selection. Among the awards recognizing his career achievements, he is distinguished as the first Native American to be named the Arizona School Administrator's Arizona Superintendent of the Year and subsequent selection as one of four finalists for the 2022 AASA's National Superintendent of the Year.



A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR FROM AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

JONATHAN PARKER

Mr. Parker graduated from the University of Redlands with degrees in Political Science and Psychology before earning a Masters' Degree in American Government from American University in Washington, D.C. Mr. Parker has been a teacher, coach, and administrator in the Glendale Union High School District since 1995. For over 20 years, Mr. Parker taught AP U.S. History at Thunderbird High School, where he also coached football, baseball, and track. For 15 years, Mr. Parker acted as the mentor-on-assignment, providing instructional coaching and facilitating professional development workshops for teachers

new to the district. An active member of the Arizona Education Association, Mr. Parker served in local, state, and national leadership positions, including Glendale Union Education Association President and as a member of the Arizona State Board of Education's Professional Practices Advisory Committee. In 2014, Mr. Parker was recognized by the Arizona Educational Foundation as an Ambassador for Excellence. Mr. Parker served as an administrator at Moon Valley High School from 2017-2019. In the spring of 2019, he accepted his current position as Principal of Sunnyslope High School.



A PARENT OF A CHILD WHO CURRENTLY ATTENDS A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ARIZONA

JEREMIAH L GALLEGOS

My career in education began in 2008, graduating from Arizona State University, teaching math to sixth grade. Over the years I have focused on a career in middle school, moving up through the grades, while always focusing on math instruction. I have had the opportunity to progress my career through higher education, attaining my Master Degree in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. Even though I finished this degree many years ago, I still have a love for staying in the classroom.

Currently, I am instructing financial literacy to our middle school students here at Collier Business Academy in the Littleton School District. I have two children in the public education school system. They are in third and sixth grade and attend Estrella Vista Elementary school in the Littleton School District. I believe Arizona can have one of the best education programs in the country because we have the best students!



A REPRESENTATIVE FROM A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON EDUCATION POLICY
MARISOL GARCIA

Marisol Garcia currently serves as the President of the Arizona Education Association (AEA). She is not new to leadership, having served as the AEA Vice President, on the AEA Board of Directors, chairing statewide committees, and co-founding the AEA Latino Outreach Cadre.

As a veteran middle-school social studies teacher in the Isaac School District, she is committed to her students and their community. She works tirelessly to make sure her students see their school as their second home – ensuring they are safe, engaged in their learning, and empowered to find their voice in their community. As the former local president of the Isaac District Education Association, she developed the association's reputation as a strong voice and advocate for students and teachers throughout the community.

Marisol comes from a family of educators; both her parents are accomplished authors and educators who have worked in public education for over 40 years. She is the proud mother of her teenage son, Vicente. Marisol earned her BA in Political Science from the University of California at San Diego and a teaching credential from San Francisco State University.



A DEAN OF A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DR. RAMONA MELLOTT

Dr. Ramona Mellott currently serves as Dean of the College of Education at Northern Arizona University and is leading the college in developing innovative solutions to many of the challenges facing education. She came to NAU in 1991 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology. She served as department chair of Educational Psychology (2000-07) and then as the Graduate Dean (2007-14) before returning as Dean to the College of Education in 2014. She serves in leadership positions on many state and national boards including the Board of Directors for the AZ K-12 Center. Current

accomplishments include expanding pathways to becoming a teacher, leader, or behavioral health professional, helping programs in the college successfully gain national accreditation, and leading efforts to address the critical teacher shortage across the state through Grow Your Own programs and leveraging the Arizona Teachers Academy scholarship.



A REPRESENTATIVE FROM A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DR. JENNIFER GRESKO

Dr. Jennifer Gresko brings more than 30 years of experience in education and leadership, beginning as a second- and third-grade teacher in Phoenix. Always eager to learn, she began mentoring other teachers on the use of technology in education and eventually took a position at the district level working with teachers and technology. This experience opened a new path at the collegiate level, leading to her current position as Faculty Chair of Educator Preparation Programs at Rio Salado College, a Maricopa County Community College. The Educator Preparation Programs at Rio Salado College were initially designed for working adults who

wanted to enter the teaching profession or continue their professional development in preK-12 education. In addition to this, she recently began leading the college initiative to offer a Bachelor of Arts, Dual Certification, Elementary and Special Education degree. She previously held positions as an elementary teacher, K-12 school district technology trainer, and as a program specialist in curriculum and assessment. Jennifer holds a BS in Elementary Education from Grand Canyon University, and an M.Ed in Elementary Education – Specialization in Educational Media and Computing and an Ed.D in Leadership and Innovation from Arizona State University.



AN EXPERT WITH SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATOR RETENTION

LLOYD HOPKINS

Lloyd Hopkins, an organizational leader with extensive experience in community and non-profit work, has always been committed to the advancement of K-12 education in Arizona. He graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in Nonprofit Management and Leadership. With his education and passion for ensuring quality education for all, he launched the Million Dollar Teacher Project in 2016. The mission of the Million Dollar Teacher Project is to elevate

the teaching profession through increased support, compensation, and recognition. Lloyd also serves as the Chair of Real Engagement through Active Philanthropy, a fund under the AZ Community Foundation, to make a positive impact on African-American Youth.

Arizona for Everyone

